HISTORIC PRESERVATION

QUARTERLY

of the

National Council for
Historic Sites and Buildings

Volume IV, No. 3 Fall 1952

SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING

November 14 and 15, the sixth annual meeting of the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings will be held at the Statler Hotel, Washington, D. C. On Thursday, November 13, advance registration and consultation with the staff is scheduled from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. at headquarters, 712 Jackson Place.

Registration will be from 9 to 10 a.m. Friday morning in the Federal Room, followed by the business meeting at which David E. Finley will present the keynote address on proposed integration of the Council with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Mrs. Harry S. Truman will receive the members and delegates at the White House Friday afternoon. As preface to that visit, Douglas William Orr, former President of the American Institute of Architects, and Vice Chairman of the Commission on the Renovation of the Executive Mansion, will discuss informally at the luncheon some of the problems encountered. At the annual dinner Friday night the Honorable Charles Bruggmann, Swiss Minister to the United States; Mrs. T. I. Hare Powel, Regent of *Mount Vernon;* and Wilmarth Lewis, author and noted Walpolian scholar will be the speakers.

Three outstanding government authorities will conduct the preservation forum Saturday morning. Printing problems will be presented by Frank Mortimer, Director of Typography and Design of the Government Printing Office; Carl Feiss, Chief of the Planning and Engineering Branch of the Division of Urban Redevelopment, will suggest ways in which the Housing Act of 1949 might be applied to the conservation of historic areas; and Ronald F. Lee, Assistant Director of the National Park Service, will stress the importance of master plans. After the brief talks a forum discussion will follow at which the speakers or other experts in the audience will offer advice on specific problems submitted.

A trip to Virginia is planned for 1:45 to 6 p.m. with buses leaving from the Statler for those who do not wish to go in private cars. Members will visit *Gunston Hall,* and then attend a reception at *Woodlawn Plantation.*

Proposed Re-Organization

At a combined meeting of the Executive Board of the National Council and the Trustees of the National Trust last spring, a Committee was appointed by David E. Finley, Chairman, to study the possibility of re-organizing the societies. H. Alexander Smith, Jr., was named Chairman, and it included Major General U. S. Grant, 3rd, J. Hardin Peterson, Ronald F. Lee, Henry H. Surface, and the Chairman, *ex-officio.*

Those who have watched most closely over the progress of the National Council and the National Trust have learned by experience the difficulties of operating two organizations with a joint program and a joint staff. It was especially true from the public relations point of view that momentum was being lost because of the need to explain the relationships between the two organizations. The result was often confusion worse confounded. Experience piled upon experience seemed to prove that anything that erased such confusion would be the greatest possible help to the common effort.

The Committee has completed its study and has found no legal difficulties that will prevent a closer liaison between the National Council and the National Trust. Its report is being presented to the Executive Board of the National Council and the Executive Committee of the National Trust in October. Any action will be reported to the membership of the National Council at the annual meeting on November 14th and 15th. The next issue of *Historic Preservation* will carry full details of the plan as finally adopted by the National Council and the National Trust.

F. L. R., Jr.

CAPE HATTERAS AREA

Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman has announced that the Old Dominion and Avalon Foundations have donated funds to meet an equal amount of North Carolina state funds for purchase of 18,400 acres for Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreation Area. This stretch of dunes and unspoiled beach along the Atlantic is also near two other National Park Service areas, Kill Devil Hill National Memorial commemorating the Wright Brothers' first successful flight, and Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, where the first English settlement was attempted, and the first English child born in the New World.

The completed area will contain 30,000 acres of unspoiled beach and scenic beauty, a vast expanse of ocean broken by small inlets, forests, coast guard stations, lighthouses, small fishing villages, and the hulks of wrecked ships offshore.

Colchester Reef Lighthouse, formerly on the Shores of Lake Champlain, now in storage at Shelburne, Vermont, for re-erection in the spring.

HISTORICAL RECORDS COURSE

Accredited courses, open to graduate and undergraduate students of accredited colleges or universities, will be offered in February, and again next summer, at the Library School of the University of Wisconsin. The semester courses will cover historical records, including printed, private manuscripts, and public archives; historical museums, sites, and restorations; state and local historiography; and the history and administration of historical agencies.

The unit of four courses is allowed as a minor for a doctorate in American history. Further information may be obtained from Clifford Lord, Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State Street, Madison, 6.

712 JACKSON PLACE

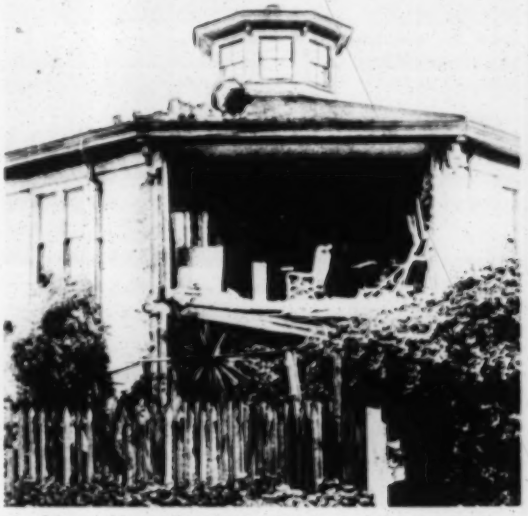
Major General U. S. Grant, 3rd, resigned as President of the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings on September 15 after more than five years in office. The General, who has retired in recent years from other important offices in the nation's capital, served the cause of historic preservation well in his work with the Council. Fortunately, he will remain as Vice Chairman of the National Trust. Mrs. Francis B. Crowninshield has been elected President by the Executive Board, as provided in the bylaws.

Hardinge Scholle, Consultant, attended the course on "The Great Houses of England" as a guest of the British National Trust. Two weeks were spent at Attingham Park, the Shropshire Adult College, and one in London. On January 26, Mr. Scholle will report his experience at the annual Antiques Forum in Williamsburg where he will present "A Schoolboy's View of the Stately Homes of England."

In July 1952, Miss Cloris Jones, the cheerful and tireless "Jonesy" who had been with the staff since 1949, returned to her home in Worthington, W. Va. Two new members have joined the staff to replace Mrs. John M. Patterson, who is now in London, and Miss Jones; Miss Lulie Jones of Richmond, Va., and Miss Carola Southers of Eau Claire, Wis.

Work is progressing at *Woodlawn Plantation* on a new entrance road and a parking lot which will accommodate 100 cars and has special facilities for buses. No intensive campaign for attracting visitors to the plantation has been made pending completion of these facilities. A new information leaflet has been prepared for wide distribution to tourist centers, and an interpretive guide is given those visiting the mansion. Worth Bailey, the curator, has designed the second in a series of documentary Christmas greetings in collaboration with the National Trust. These may be obtained from *Woodlawn Plantation*, Mount Vernon, Va. This year's greeting is a winter scene of *Mount Vernon*, with a Christmas greeting of George Washington, the background color is red.

OCTAGON HOUSES



Octagon House after the San Francisco earthquake, 1906
S. F. Chronicle

Preservation of the threatened octagon house in San Francisco has been assured. The Pacific Gas and Electric Company, which had no use for the historic building, made an arrangement to permit the Colonial Dames of America to remove it from their property. Two anonymous donors owning property immediately across the street, gave a new site, and plans for moving and remodelling it as society headquarters are now under way. Mrs. N. B. Livermore, a Council member in California, has been among those whose continued interest made this possible. Warren Charles Perry, A. I. A., is architect.

From a Michigan member comes a report of the loss of another of these rare structures, "I regret to report that one of the last surviving houses in my native town of Plymouth, Michigan, was razed this spring: the Octagon House, built about 1850, a handsome and curious place constructed of lime plaster material, surmounted by a circular glass dome. It was built by Germans from local materials and at one time had floor-paintings. This house, which stood in a splendid place overlooking the valley of the little River Rouge, has been destroyed to make room for a silly modern bungalow; it was in perfect condition. One other octagon house, well cared for, survives in the vicinity of Plymouth — and several Greek Revival houses of the temple sort."

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NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

President: Mrs. F. B. Crowninshield
Chairman of the Executive Board: David E. Finley
Director: Frederick L. Rath, Jr. *Administrator:* Henry H. Surface
Editor: Helen Duprey Bullock *Business Manager:* Betty W. Morris

PRESERVATION IN TIME OF WAR

Library of Congress has made a major contribution to the cause of preservation in publishing *Safeguarding our Cultural Heritage; a Bibliography on the Protection of Museums, Works of Art, Monuments, Archives and Libraries in Time of War,* compiled by Nelson R. Burr This 117-page volume, with an index, is a critical and selective bibliography on the experiences, chiefly of European nations, in the Spanish Civil War and World War II.

Under general literature it covers such subjects as protection, fire protection, protective construction (including shelters), packing and transportation and war damage insurance. Another section is devoted to the particular problems involved in protecting museums, works of art and monuments, and includes sections on international conventions, conditioning of shelters, cleaning, repair and restoration. The subject of archival protection is covered by sections on paper salvage hazard, salvage of damaged records, and film records. Problems peculiar to libraries, not encompassed in the other categories, are dealt with in a concluding section.

Dr. Luther H. Evans, Librarian of Congress, in the foreward explains their purpose in undertaking this valuable compilation:

"Our cultural heritage finds its expression in the common, every-day activities which are the sum and substance of our character as a people and a nation. We must not lose this heritage, and we must understand it. Knowledge of the antecedents of this heritage is the keystone of any conscious effort to achieve meaningful goals for ourselves as individuals and as a people. In order to obtain and secure such knowledge and understanding, we must protect and preserve the cultural treasures that are the physical reminders of our past.

"It is obvious that when faced with threats of war the immediate problems of self-preservation overshadow those pursuits that require the longer lasting climate of peace. Our efforts must therefore be joined now with those of all nations to develop effective methods and techniques for the protection of the possessions of libraries, archival agencies, museums and art galleries. It is our hope that this bibliography is a contribution to this goal."

We urge all of our members and member organizations concerned in the preservation of the historic houses museums and other treasures of our American past in their custody to obtain copies of this document. It is sold by the Card Division, Library of Congress, Washington 25, D. C., price 85c. Its purchase may be charged against card accounts of regular subscribers; others should pay in advance by check or money order to the Librarian of Congress. Postage stamps are not acceptable. Purchases from foreign countries may be made with UNESCO Book Coupons.

H. D. B.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society launched a television program this summer over station WBNS-TV called "Ohio Country." Norman Dohn, the *Columbus-Dispatch's* Globe Trotter, is host and introduces members of the society or invited guests, who present programs on the historic properties administered by them. Each program is offered in the form of a tour to one of the properties with Mr. Dohn suggesting routes, picnic grounds and places of interest along the way. Among the tours were those to Newark Mound, Camp Martius, Rutherford B. Hayes Memorial Library and Museum, and the William Tecumseh Sherman House.

One of the outstanding events in a crowded fall and winter program planned for Williamsburg, Va. will be a series of musical performances in the Governor's Palace. These are scheduled for every Thursday evening September 18 through November 13. Three performances of the Italian opera, *La Serva Padrona,* are scheduled, and on October 28, the violinist, Nathan Goldstein, will offer a special recital.

Norman B. Smith, a Charter Associate of the National Council from Providence, R. I., has just purchased the Immanuel Case house on the north side of Main Street, Wickford. The house which was built in 1770, for many years served as a public hall and tavern as well as a dwelling.

The James Monroe Law Office, Fredericksburg, Va., this year is celebrating the 25th anniversary of its opening to the public. The furnishings of the Law Office and Museums are unique, never having been out of the possession of the Monroe family until they were deposited there.

Washington County Historical Society, which has been engaged in the restoration of the old stone house of Jonathan Hager, founder of Hagerstown, Md., held a display of artifacts recovered in the process of archaeological investigations, in the Mansion House of City Park. During the winter months, the old wrought iron work, British and American coins, old lighting fixtures, cutlery, glass and china may be seen by special appointment with Mrs. Frank J. Mish. Jr., Chairman of the Restoration, by telephoning her residence at nearby Falling Waters, W. Va.

Treasure House, a 250-year old inn in Richmondtown, N. Y., is scheduled for restoration this fall by the Staten Island Historical Society as the first of 30 structures in their program for reclamation of the historic portion of this early colonial settlement. The inn was so named because in 1850 someone digging in the area found $5500 in old British coins, believed to have been cached there when the British army occupied the town in the Revolution.

Mrs. Peter Jay and Mrs. McCook Knox, Charter Associates of the Council, took an active part in the restoration and furnishing of the McCook House in Carrolton, Ohio. The house built by Daniel McCook in the 1830's, is on the public square. He and his nine sons, and five sons of his brother, Dr. John McCook, served the Union in the Civil War, seven winning the rank of general. A law office, parlor and bedroom are furnished in the period. An entire wing on the first floor is devoted to exhibits illustrating Ohio's role in the Civil War. The house was opened to the public this summer under the auspices of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society.

Minnesota Historical Society has just issued its quarterly in new format. *Minnesota History, the North Star State in Words and Pictures* is a 92-page magazine with illustrations from rare old prints and photographs. Correspondence concerning subscriptions or contributions may be addressed to Harold Dean Cater, Editor, Minnesota Historical Society, Central Avenue and Cedar Streets, St. Paul 1.

Edward Weeks, the Peripatetic Reviewer, mentioned the program and publications of the National Council in his column "The Bookshelf" in a recent issue of *The Atlantic Monthly.* More than 90 of his readers wrote in, many of them with queries about the use of valuable historic properties they owned, others expressing interest in the preservation movement. The requested literature was sent to all, and a number of these readers have become Council members.

PROPOSED PRESERVATION

Painesville, Ohio—The Fairport Harbor Historical Society, which maintains the Great Lakes Marine Museum, is planning to acquire and preserve the historic lighthouse on the corner of 2nd and High Streets which has been declared surplus.

Nahma, Mich.—A lumbering museum depicting the tools and implements that were used in the early lumberjack era of Michigan is planned for the community. Relics and documents are being collected and will be displayed in an old red barn.

Los Angeles, Calif.—Restoration of the famous mission bells of El Camino Real has been proposed by the Mission Trails Association. Vandals have destroyed most of what were once 450 original bells on the road from San Diego to Sonoma, and relocation of Highway 101 jeopardizes others.

Omaha, Neb.—Nebraska State Historical Society has called upon its members to assist in compiling a list of all pioneer sod houses still standing in that state. Many of these characteristic old structures are still in use, others may be in need of some protection or preservation.

Mount Carmel, S. C.—Fort Charlotte, which was seized by Revolutionary patriots in what was described as "the first real act of defiance against the British crown," was moved from its threatened location on the banks of the Savannah River. The Clark Hill dam will flood the old site, but on new, higher ground, the fort will be developed as an historic site and recreation area.

Fort Lauderdale, Fla.—A famous Spanish monastery, once owned by the late William Randolph Hearst, is being reassembled stone by stone on a garden site near this city. King Alphonso VII of Castile built the monastery in 1141 to commemorate his successes against the Moors.

Wichita, Kansas — Members of Historic Wichita, Inc., a member organization, have announced that work has been scheduled on four buildings of Cowtown of 1872. The buildings slated for re-erection on the park site are the old town calaboose, the Munger house, the first church and parsonage.

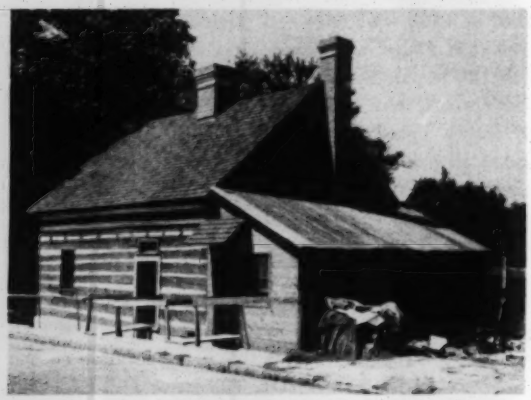
COLCHESTER LIGHTHOUSE

When Colchester Reef Lighthouse on the shores of Lake Champlain was declared surplus, it was sold with a stipulation that it be removed in thirty days. A member organization, The Shelburne Museum purchased it, planning to preserve it, but time was needed to dismantle it properly. To a letter from the National Council asking special consideration of this case, Rear Admiral L. B. Olson of the U. S. Coast Guard replied, "I am happy to assure you that this additional time has

been granted to Mrs. Webb. While we have no authority for expenditure of funds for the preservation of sites and buildings which have historic and sentimental value, you may be assured that we are in entire sympathy with the objectives of your organization and will do everything that we can to cooperate."

With a good sturdy launch and a large barge, a crew worked for five weeks dismantling the heavy structure. Good weather helped and the dangerous landings on the reef were made without accident. The last load was removed on August 28, and the materials are now in storage in Vermont for re-erection in the spring.

SHINGLES FOR OLD SALEM



Lick-Boner House in Old Salem Village, Winston-Salem, N. C.
Ed T. Simons

Restoration of the Lick-Boner House (1787), the first project of Old Salem, Inc., was under way this spring, when the City Council called upon the Secretary, Frank L. Horton, to appear before the next weekly meeting to justify use of painted, trimmed, wooden shingles in violation of a local fire ordinance. Their use had been confirmed by archaeological and documentary evidence, so Mr. Horton telephoned National Council headquarters for help in presenting his case. Letters were sent to 13 architects and members who might have been faced with restorations within urban areas where local ordinances prohibited use of wooden shingles.

Melvin J. Weig reported from Morristown National Historical Park the use of hand-split red cedar shingles on two historic buildings within township limits; Milton L. Grigg stated that the city of Philadelphia permitted wood shingles on the Betsy Ross house; Charles R. Strickland told of their use on the Paul Revere house in Boston, and the Richard Sparrow house in Plymouth, and other New England restorations; Frederic C. Palmer reported their use in Wethersfield for restorations of the Antiquarian and Landmarks Society of Connecticut; and similar statements were promptly received from those consulted.

Mr. Horton said that the co-operation of the National Council and its members prevailed upon the City Council to grant an exception, and the roof of the Lick-Boner house has been completed with shingles that duplicate those first used on the building.

FOREIGN PRESERVATION

Avot St. Lawrence, England—George Bernard Shaw, who bequeathed his home *Shaw's Corner* to the British National Trust as a memorial to himself, failed to bequeath a fund for its maintenance and operation. For a few short weeks after his death the town was flooded with visitors, and a parking lot costing £400 was constructed for their accommodation. Then the visitors stopped coming, the postmistress in the little village was left with hundreds of unsold photographs of the playwright, and a year-long drive of the Bernard Shaw Memorial Appeal Fund was launched. The fund drive has failed and the National Trust may be forced to abandon the project.

Oberwessel, Germany — Schoenberg Castle was transformed into a European Youth resort through the generosity of an American, the late Thomas Jackson Rhinelander of New York. Representatives of seven countries attended festivities in the castle on the Rhine to mark the completion of a $500,000 restoration.

Dublin, Ireland—Debate on the Tourist Bill in the Seanad covered such a variety of topics as better care and feeding of tourists, signposting on roads of scenic or historic interest, efficient rail service, more racing days and improving properties under the jurisdiction of the National Monuments Committee. The debate on the food problem was extended, with Senator Quirke urging that the foreign tourist be fed a good forthright Irish meal, and not a poor imitation of the type of meal he had at home.

Detail of roof and corner construction at roof-plate, Lick-Boner House.
Ed T. Simons

ACTIVE PRESERVATION

Marquette, Mich.—The state of Michigan has completed an extensive renovation of Fort Wilkins (1844-1870), the only surviving stockaded fort between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi still retaining most of its original log structures. The Marquette County Historical Society provided authentic furnishings for officers' quarters, including the first piano brought to Copper County by pioneer settlers.

Hopewell, Pa.—More than 4000 persons attended open house recently at Hopewell Village National Historic Site, when the restored water wheel and blast furnace were dedicated. The principal address was delivered by Melvin J. Weig, Historian at Morristown National Historical Park, who recounted the history of this national monument to early iron industry.

East Greenwich, R. I.—Varnum House (1773), the restored home of General James Mitchell Varnum, attorney and distinguished Revolutionary patriot, was opened this summer. The public may visit every Sunday afternoon from 3 until 5, or by special arrangement (Telephone: GReenwich 1-0376). Small parties, by invitation, may use the house for teas and social gatherings.

Augusta, Ga.—Richmond County Historical Society, which acquired the *White House* on Upper Broad Street, is now conducting a campaign for funds to provide for its restoration. The siege of the *White House*, Sept. 14-18, 1780, and the subsequent defeat of the American forces are among the most sanguinary and tragic tales of the Revolution in Georgia.

Little Falls, Minn.—Toy soldiers, fishing tackle, a damaged wooden propeller and family china are among the mementoes of Charles A. Lindbergh displayed at the newly-opened museum in his old family home in Lindbergh State Park.

Long Island, N. Y.—After more than three decades of struggle to acquire and preserve the farmhouse where the "good gray poet" was born, the Walt Whitman Birthplace Association dedicated their museum on the 133rd anniversary of his birth.

San Antonio, Texas—The San Antonio National Bank, the first national bank to be established in that city, has recently remodelled its pioneer quarters. Although complete with air conditioning, modern tellers' cages, and drive-in facilities, the desk of founder George W. Brackinridge, other Victorian furniture, turkey red walls and carpets have been retained, and the director's room has many objects pertaining to early banking and the history of San Antonio.

Alexandria, Va.—Bill Gold in the Washington *Post* reports on some of the hazards of living in this historic city in a well-restored house. Mrs. Una Franklin Carter, living in the house that two centuries ago was the home of Dr. James Craik, friend and personal physician of George Washington, has a bronze placque mentioning the fact on the outside of the house. At regular intervals distraught Alexandrians come knocking at the door to ask, "Is the doctor in?"

SAFETY FOR A SHRINE

Boston's historical Old North Church is being equipped with a code fire-alarm box. This device will set itself off the moment its electronic "feelers" discover smoke or heat. The coded signal it sends eliminates all delay in notifying the Fire Department. No sooner is the code received than the vehicles are on their way to the church.

This type of fire alarm has been in use in schools, apartments, houses, some hospitals and theaters. It is believed that the Old North will be the first church so equipped. Yet churches have shown themselves badly in need of some such warning system.

The National Fire Protective Association reports that in 1950 there were 3,100 church fires in America. Most of these resulted in a complete loss of the buildings because usually the only warning comes from a passer-by after the blaze is established.

It could be well for Boston's historical shrines, many of which would be easy prey to a fire, to be adequately fitted with modern alarm systems such as this one. It is a good beginning when the church that once warned a nation of peril should remain a symbol of warning.

Boston (Mass.) *Globe*

HELP WANTED

More and more frequently the National Council has been called upon to serve as a personnel office. Not only have an increasing number of prospective employers consulted the Headquarters office, but many applicants for work in the preservation field have either written in or appeared in person. Thus there is a growing roster of men and women of all ages who have at least expressed their interest in employment in the historic preservation field. The scarcity of trained personnel and the growing demand mean that the National Council cannot always recommend specialists in every phase of the work. But applications are welcomed, and members and member organizations on the market for new employees are requested to inform the Headquarters office of their needs.

PASSING PARADE

Stereopticon view of Grand Union Hotel, Saratoga Springs. 1903 *Library of Congress*

Saratoga Springs, N. Y.—In 1864, the year Saratoga race track opened, the Grand Union was built. This fashionable hostelry for race-track followers boasted 650 rooms, 7 acres of grounds, steam elevators, and advertised the longest single front porch in the world — one quarter of a mile of it. The building is scheduled to be wrecked and auctioneers have already been reported to have paid $100,000 for its once luxurious furnishings.

Washington, D. C.—Woodley Mansion, historic Summer White House, reported again in danger only in the last issue of the quarterly from threatened sub-division of its wooded park into 115 building sites, succumbed to another enemy in August. A three-alarm fire of unknown origin, believed to be incendiary, caused more than $100,000 damage to its handsome Regency interior.

Ottawa, Canada—Fire swept the old Parliamentary Library in Ottawa, ruining tens of thousands of books with the quantities of water released by the automatic sprinkler system and by firemen who battled fire in the circular-shaped dome for several days. In response to a request from Mr. C. D. Howe, Acting Prime Minister, Alvin W. Kremer, Keeper of the Collections of the Library of Congress, flew to Ottawa to advise Library officials on methods of salvaging the water-soaked materials.

San Antonio, Texas—Despite protests of the San Antonio Conservation Society, the National Council, and leading citizens of the city, the Federal Reserve Bank razed the historic James Vance house (1854) on Nueva Street to provide additional facilities for its operations. Built by the distinguished architect, John Fries, the house was noted historically as one at which General Robert E. Lee was a frequent visitor.

Union County, N. J.—Demolition of the old Thomas Thompson house at the Milltown Road crossing of the Rahway River marks the end of one of few remaining pre-Revolutionary structures in the county. The house was built more than 200 years ago, by Thompson who operated saw and grist mills nearby that gave the road its early name. It was razed to make way for new plants in the township's program of industrial expansion.

Marshfield, Mass.—An open-air roller skating rink opened for business on the lawn of Daniel Webster's old home. The home itself burned many years ago, and the rink-owners said, "we want to give Marshfield teenagers a clean spot to come to and we figure Daniel Webster wouldn't mind too much."

Mineral Point, Wis.—The city fathers of the old lead and zinc mining community settled in 1830 by Cornish miners are planning to build a municipal maintenance garage and other facilities on historic Shake Rag Street. This, despite the fact that private restorations by descendants of the town's founders are attracting many tourists to the little community to see miners' homes built like those left behind in Cornwall.